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Theology in the Catholic College

GEORGE H. TAVARD

Seeds Behind the Wall

DANIEL CALLAHAN

Auden's Sacred Awe

RICHARD M. OHMANN

They're Trying to Tell Us Something

JOHN COGLEY

VOLUME LXXVIII, NO. 10 MAY 31, 1963 TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

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232 Madison Avenue, New York 16, N.Y.

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Second-class postage paid at Norwalk, Conn. Printed in the U.S.A. and published weekly, except biweekly from mid-July to mid-September, at 116 Main St., Norwalk, Conn., by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 232 Madison Ave., New York 16, N.Y. MUrray Hill 3-2042.

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U.S. and Canada, $8 a year. Foreign, $10. Single copies 25¢.

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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

Mr. Kennedy and Apathy

ONE WISECRACK has it that the President's '64 campaign slogan should be "Let's get the country moving again, again." Partisan or not, the remark points up the contrast between the confident, aggressive candidate of 1960 and the President of 1963, whose dealings with Congress have made him a sober, if not a baffled, proponent of changes nobody seems to want. School aid, urban renewal, mass transit, civil rights, medicare and the tax cut still await meaningful legislative action. To be sure, a significant number of voters support the President's program, but their voices are filtered through a sluggish Congress that is institutionally, if not temperamentally, structured to smother any sense of urgency.

Yet the urgency is there. Delay on school aid, as Walter Lippmann points out, perpetuates the kind of second-rate education whose damaging effects will be felt for decades to come. The urban tangle, already regarded as hopeless in many quarters, grows worse by the week, but Congress shows little sympathy. No attempt is being made on civil rights legislation; the tax cut, its value supposed to be based upon quick passage, has not even been launched on its first set of Congressional hearings.

The President's entire domestic program languishes, and it often seems that the only spirited discussion in Congress is on Cuba. Why? The usual reflex is to blame Congress as hopelessly conservative and unrepresentative of the country's wishes. Now, however, political analysts are beginning to say that by and large Congress is not frustrating the will of the voter, but reflecting it, however tortuously.

As William V. Shannon wrote in these pages recently, Congressmen returning to Washington after the Easter recess conveyed to reporters the general impression that Mr. Kennedy's program "does not arouse vehement support or angry opposition." T.R.B., the *New Republic* columnist who handled President Eisenhower so roughly for "tranquilizing" the national consciousness, now thinks that national apathy may be a political fact common to both the Eisenhower and Kennedy years. He quotes Richard Rovere, writing in the *New Yorker* on "the immense political presence of public apathy," which "deadens the air, and muffles and muddles controversy." Cornell professor Andrew Hacker seems to agree. In the *New York Times Magazine* he wrote that the nation feels too well off to seriously entertain the proposed reforms. There is not much point, he says, "in exhorting a self-satisfied public to a state of mind it doesn't care to embrace."

THIS BRINGS us back to the President. If the public is as self-satisfied as Professor Hacker believes, the President's commitment to his domestic program would seem to call for a more vigorous assault on this self-satisfaction. The President, of course, has his problems with the Southern bloc in Congress. But even apart from this, it has appeared to many observers that his respect for the political facts of life is too great—that he would much rather accept public opinion than try to change it.

The President's sympathies are liberal, but, as James MacGregor Burns points out, his approach is conservative: his respect for established institutions and traditional processes makes him less likely to force issues than another President of similar powers and conviction might be. He tends to shy away from legislative end-runs (such as the parliamentary device to pluck a pigeon-holed bill from committee). Perhaps for this same reason he is reluctant to set his case before the voters, which after all, can be looked upon as an attempt to by-pass Congress.

It is on this point—the failure to carry his case directly to the public—that the President has been criticized, and justly so, in our opinion. The country is prosperous and finds it difficult to understand arguments about crises we can expect in ten or

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fifteen years if we don't act now. It would much rather talk exclusively about the clear problems of the moment, such as Cuba, than take up a study of unemployment statistics, tax charts or school enrollments. In this context, we feel the President should bring the full educational function of his office to bear. Any President, of course, has the ear of the nation as no other spokesman does. In addition, the pollsters tell us that President Kennedy enjoys an astonishingly high degree of popularity. Yet he has made no real effort to translate this popularity into support for his programs.

In our opinion the President's sense of urgency is not in doubt, but he has not communicated this sense to the nation. He has not explained his program or why he thinks it so important. If he, himself, does not become more actively involved, he can hardly hope for the nation to do so. A recent photo-cartoon applies here. In the picture Kennedy is standing before a portrait of Franklin Roosevelt. F. D. R. gazes down and says, "Try fireside chats."

Peace with Justice

DOUBTLESS many peace-loving citizens the country over welcomed, some weeks ago, the news of a joint plea for moderation signed by eight of Birmingham's religious leaders, including the Auxiliary Bishop of the Catholic diocese of Mobile-Birmingham. The statement called upon the Negro demonstrators to disperse and "to unite locally in working peacefully for a better Birmingham." It also cited for their calm the white community, the local newspapers and "law enforcement officers, in particular."

Martin Luther King has now issued a remarkable rejoinder almost considered enough to serve as his apologia. It unfolds a disheartening catalogue of broken promises and thwarted hopes, injustices and brutality, with the ineffectuality of every legal recourse. Dr. King also makes a compelling distinction between just laws, which are binding in conscience, and unjust laws, which are not. He reaches "the regrettable conclusion" that it is not so much the white supremacist who blocks the Negro's path to freedom, "but the white moderate who is more devoted to 'order' than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice."

Dr. King's success in schooling his numerous followers in the techniques and spirit of non-violence in the face of the most galling provocation merits the widest recognition. It is a courageous attempt to win over one's persecutors by suffering violence without retaliating, by courting bodily injury, personal humiliation and prison for justice' sake. And his letter to his Alabama fellow-clergymen makes abundantly clear what the demonstrations there are all about: ". . . We have waited for more than three hundred and forty years for our Constitutional and God-given rights. . . . I guess it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say 'wait.' . . . But when you find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; when you are humiliated day in and day out by nagging signs reading 'white' men and 'colored'; when your first name becomes 'nigger' and your middle name becomes 'boy' (however old you are) and your last name becomes 'John,' and when your wife and mother are never given the respected title 'Mrs.'; when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tiptoe stance . . . and plagued with inner fears and outer resentments; when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of 'nobodiness'—then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait."

Cardinal Suenens

AFTER THE impressive and unprecedented visit of Leon-Joseph Cardinal Suenens, Archbishop of Malines-Brussels, Belgium, to the United Nations recently, there should no longer be any mistake about the basic thrust and spirit of Pope John's *Pacem in Terris.* Cardinal Suenens was invited by the United States Committee for the United Nations expressly to explain the message of this extraordinary encyclical. He did so in a statement that wasted no words and was eloquent throughout.

While stressing the Pope's basic teaching on peace, the Cardinal emphasized a dimension of the encyclical which it is all too easy to miss, on account of its general orientation, namely, the fundamental value with which it invests the rights and duties of the individual person. In fact the work of peace is founded upon the individual, who must first make peace within himself. As Cardinal Suenens remarked, international peace "coincides, at the start, with the frontiers of our hearts."

The other great plea of the encyclical, that for world action, has not been so easy to overlook. "The hour has come for a vast collective movement of aid and of effective solidarity at the scale of our needs," the Cardinal commented. It is precisely this which calls for effective collaboration with all men of good will, beyond the ideologies which may at present beset them. Yet while this collective action is demanded, it is good that Cardinal Suenens has emphasized the crucial affirmation of Pope John that

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this journey of a thousand leagues begins with a single step, which it is the individual's to take.

States' Rights?

IT IS good to note a growing opposition to the so-called states' rights amendments which are currently being sponsored in the state legislatures by various committees and political officials. Those amendments are embodied in three resolutions, which, until recently, received hardly any publicity. One amendment would remove all constitutional restrictions on how the states apportion their legislatures and bar the federal courts from handling the problem. Another would allow the state legislatures themselves, in certain cases, to amend the Constitution in the future, without having to go through Congress. And a third would set up a "Court of the Union," made up of the Chief Justices of the fifty states, to review the decisions of the Supreme Court. All too quietly, a dozen state legislatures have approved the apportionment amendment, eleven the resolution changing the amendment procedure itself, and three the "Court of the Union."

There is no need to waste time discussing the third of the above resolutions. The idea of a "Court of the Union" is simply ridiculous, one which could have mustered interesting arguments in the Federalist period, but hardly in this one. It would practically void the effectiveness of the Constitution and has been sufficiently denounced by every responsible legal group not to detain us here. Arkansas, Florida, and Wyoming are not to be congratulated for having voted this absurd resolution.

The amendment affecting apportionment would cancel the Supreme Court's decision of 1962, which opened state legislative districting to the scrutiny of the federal courts. That would indeed be a step backward, for it would deprive United States citizens of their right to seek judicial relief from unfair representation. The amendment is being pushed by rural legislators out of a groundless fear of losing their voting power. It seeks to perpetuate an unbalanced districting in the face of increasing urbanization.

As for the resolution embodying a change in the amendment procedure itself, little enough can be said for it. What it proposes is the by-passing of a constitutional convention for the purpose of ratification in the cases where two-thirds of the states have already adopted a resolution embodying the amendment. This change in the amendment process would, as its opponents argue, result in the very bodies that are malapportioned in many states having the sole right to ratify the constitutional amendments that they might propose on such subjects as apportionment. It is, obviously, a loaded resolution.

Aside from the amendments themselves, the most deplorable thing about them has been the silence which has surrounded them in the public forum so far. It is almost as though their backers were trying to sneak them through the states. In the case of New Jersey, which has supported the first two, that seems to be what happened, since there was no voice of opposition. Happily, since some public figures have awakened, there is a chance for New Jersey to reverse her decision. In Ohio, on the other hand, where the amendments were all but dead, there has been a switch in voting, and they now face a critical test in the Senate. The votes of these Northern urban states are crucial in the fate of the amendments. If they can pass in these states, then their opponents will have reason to worry.

Student Freedom

IN THE PAST decade, perhaps no American Catholic university has given such ample evidence of the re-birth of Catholic learning as Notre Dame. Many Catholic universities have, of late, taken the criticisms of Catholic higher education seriously; but few have acted with the energy, zeal and imagination of Notre Dame. And much of the credit for its many innovations and successes must go to Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, its able President.

It is, then, all the more surprising that Notre Dame should recently have been the scene of the kind of drama that plays itself out with some frequency on most Catholic campuses: the censorship of a student publication, an indignant student protest, a defense of suppression by the administration. The finale, of course, is familiar: the administration wins, the students lick their wounds, everything returns to normal.

In this instance, however, it may be more difficult than usual to bring the campus back to an even keel. Unluckily for the university, it has run head-on into a new generation of undergraduates—a generation which shows itself increasingly concerned with freedom of student expression, and far less willing to assume that teacher knows best. For some, this shift in student attitudes will bespeak only the symptoms of a world which has lost respect for authority (or authority-figures, at any rate).

For others, the Notre Dame students will appear in a brighter light. For what they will realize is that one of the penalties for having good students and exposing them to a good education is that they are going to be critical of their elders. In the case of Notre Dame, one would not have had to be pro-

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phetic to guess that its present students would sooner or later cause the administration some pains and heartaches. The pain came in the form of a number of articles in a student magazine, the *Scholastic,* which dealt harshly with the faculty, especially the clerical faculty. To add to the shock, the magazine suggested in an editorial that Father Hesburgh should resign in favor of a lay president.

President Hesburgh's reaction—in a letter to the student body—revealed both pain and heartache: pain that the students should show themselves to be so sharp in their criticisms, heartache that "the lifelong dedication of hundreds of valiant priests and brothers over the course of 120 years since the birth of Notre Dame, was brushed off in several penstrokes." Altogether, the "negative attitude" of the *Scholastic* editors and their "bitter analysis that often missed the point by ignoring or misrepresenting the facts of the matter" were not acceptable to Father Hesburgh. "Faculty and students," he reminded his readers, "are not equal partners in the educative process here. . . . Nor do I consider student leaders to be makers of broad university policy or wielders of pressure, except in their own domain."

Father Hesburgh's points are pertinent. But it is unlikely that the editors of the *Scholastic* could have had any doubts about their share in shaping university policy: a number of their articles were suppressed and they were presented with ultimatums about prior censorship of their work. The reaction of the students could hardly have been favorable.

While it is difficult for us to evaluate the various charges and counter-charges concerning the incident, our sympathies incline toward the students—even though the difficulties of Fr. Hesburgh's awkward position need to be kept in mind. No one has ever devised a foolproof way of keeping free men from doing or saying irresponsible things; nor has anyone ever discovered a way of imposing a sense of responsibility on students. The unfortunate part of the university's response to the students was that it tried to counter their excesses with the traditional formula of suppression and admonition. Since the university does have the power, the suppression was easy enough. But if the admonition, which was marked by charity and good humor, succeeded in impressing the students, we will be surprised.

For the inescapable fact is that, amidst all its great progress, the university quailed before student freedom when it began to pinch and fell back on the solutions of the past. At no time did the criticisms of the students threaten the real authority of the university; they threatened only an older tradition of faculty-student relations. If the administration had kept this distinction in mind, it might have come up with a resolution of the problem in keeping with Notre Dame's justified reputation for creativity.

HERE AND THERE

They're Trying to Tell Us Something

MY PHILOSOPHER-COLLEAGUE Scott Buchanan startled some of his liberal friends not long ago when he suggested that the Birch Society might be, in one perspective, a healthy democratic development. Of the Birchites he said: "They are stinging us into a kind of life. They're gadflies in the sense that Socrates was. They are making us stand to our colors a bit, making us ask ourselves whether we really believe in free speech, among other things, and whether we want them to be allowed to talk."

The Birchites and similar groups, Mr. Buchanan holds, may, in their fashion, be raising basic political questions. Speaking of the behavior of revolutionary groups in general, he said: "It is the duty of people who are concerned about government to respond to these things in as reasonable and sensitive and understanding a way as possible, to legitimize these revolutionary activities, including the Birchites'."

Until I learned of Mr. Buchanan's position, I suppose I went along with the idea that the Birchites and their kind were more of a nuisance than a stimulant. I refused to take them seriously, even as gadflies. To be sure, on more than one occasion, I was personally stung by them. In 1961, for example, through birchy pressure, the Bishop of San Diego was persuaded to un-invite me and two others who had been scheduled to give talks at the Cardijn Center there. The incident was widely noted in the Catholic press at the time—and with general disapproval, to the apparent dismay of the San Diego authorities. In the subsequent consternation, some foolish and irresponsible things were said by a spokesman for the diocese, and his words are still being quoted in the mimeograph press of the far right. But I survived, as did the other two gentlemen. I don't know what difficulties they may have had, but happily, neither my livelihood nor reputation was dependent on the sense of justice cultivated in Catholic San Diego.

Then, more recently, there was another incident when it was announced that I was scheduled to address the Catholic Library Association's annual convention.

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Again, the mimeograph machines were put to work. Delegates to the convention were urged to reconsider the engagement, to protest to the Ordinary of the diocese where the convention was going to be held, and make their disapproval known. The Catholic Library Association did not bow to the pressure. I gave the speech without incident, and that was that. In this case, the birchy effort was not immediately effective, though I suppose a certain amount of residual success is always attached to campaigns of this type, for, if only to escape the sheer annoyance of them, organizations tend to avoid "controversial" speakers.

IN ANY CASE, these experiences were behind me when I began to face up to Mr. Buchanan's view of our far-right "revolutionaries": they are trying to tell us something; we should listen. Mr. Buchanan grants that the methods used to gain a hearing are not reasonable; they are "sometimes coercive and sometimes very vicious-looking." But that is because the normal means of communication have failed. Those who should have been listening have not been, so the frustrated rightists (or leftists) take these angry ways to make their presence known, like distraught children banging heads against the wall or kicking the nearest adults.

I asked myself, when these personal experiences with birchism erupted, why *I* should be one of the specific objects of their fear, or anger, or frustration, or whatever it is that motivates them. My views have never been that clear-cut one way or the other. I'm afraid I am usually a disappointment to those who have been led to cast me in the role of an all-out liberal and frequently a surprise to those who have cast me as a complete opponent of the conservative cause. In a word, I know in my heart that I am simply not the kind of person about whom such controversies should swirl. When incidents like the San Diego affair turned up, I got the feeling that they involved someone I don't really know very well. Though there is a certain flattery about getting such attention, it always seemed to me that the Birchites were shooting at the wrong target, though they did not realize it.

Now Mr. Buchanan's thesis suggests to me that they may have had the right person all the time. Their rebellion is against a society that will not listen. Through a fortuitous set of circumstances, for the Catholics among them, I may have become one of the living symbols of that society. That is why I have gotten a share of frustration-induced kicks in the shins. I am neither so important as to make the symbolic kick a sign of all-out rebellion against society, nor so obscure as to make it meaningless. I stand, rather, as a representative of those who have access to the respectable organs of communication and to people deemed members of the Establishment which will not listen to them. If I were unequivocally in revolt, even though I might be revolting for leftist rather than rightist reasons, our kinship would be recognizable. I would be a kind of secret ally. But the very moderation and basic acceptance of the status quo that I thought rendered me harmless they see as a sign of the in-group's maddening indifference to their concerns.

(This amateurish piece of analysis is wildly speculative, of course, as well as shamelessly autobiographical. I have invoked personal experiences not because they are unique but because they have been duplicated in the case of other, more significant persons. Test the theory, for example, against the banning of the four theologians on the Catholic University campus.)

AFTER being persuaded to go along with Mr. Buchanan's "they are trying to tell us something" explanation for the unpleasant behavior of such groups, I was naturally faced with the question: Well, what then do they have in mind? What are they trying to say?

Mr. Buchanan himself does not pretend to know. That knowledge, he says, comes only after long and patient listening. Perhaps beyond a vague rebellion against the actual workings of American democracy, they are not quite sure themselves. The first stirrings of discontent are usually far ahead of any blueprint for revolution. That, I take it, is why Mr. Buchanan argues that the means for legitimating their feelings of frustration should be sought. The frustrated child, in his feeling of being ignored, strikes out wildly in all directions.

Before rationality can enter the picture again, the frustration must be assuaged. Even after a room is suddenly quieted for him, all eyes cast in his direction, he does not know himself quite what he has in mind until passion has completely subsided. Then, when he is sure that everyone is listening, and is thoroughly convinced that no tricks are being employed to entrap him, he finally begins to collect his thoughts, state his argument, and is gradually ready to engage in the process of mutual persuasion.

It is easy to dismiss the behavior of the far rightists as paranoia, sheer and simple. I confess that explanation satisfied me until I encountered the Buchanan thesis. But Mr. Buchanan's faith in the abiding power of human reason was stronger than mine. It led him to see what I may have missed.

If he is right about the Birchites, the nation has on its hands not so much a psychiatric problem as a political problem that will require inventiveness of the highest order. Perhaps we have taken their outpourings too literally, emphasizing the absurd charges against General Eisenhower and all the rest. Those silly statements may be a kind of unconscious Aesopian language telling us something we really should hear. The political task for the rest of us, then, is to decode the message.

JOHN COGLEY

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Missouri Shows Them

CATHOLICS in Missouri have called off their program to enroll parochial school children in the public schools as a protest over the failure of the state legislature to provide bus transportation for parochial as well as public school children. A story in the Brooklyn *Tablet* called the protest movement "one of the outstanding civil rights demonstrations by American Catholics." My own feelings on the matter are somewhat mixed.

What bothered Catholics in Missouri was the failure of the state legislature to pass a school bus bill which provided for the transportation of parochial as well as public school children. Many states supply such transportation, resolving the Church-State issue by holding that bus transportation is intended for the health and safety of the child, not the benefit of the school. Other states, including Missouri, fail to do so, with opponents charging that such aid provides unconstitutional aid to religion. In Missouri, to make the irony for Catholics complete, the parliamentary move to table the bus bill, which in effect killed it, was made by a representative who is himself a Baptist minister.

This was not the only ironic aspect in the Missouri affair. The principal critics of the proposal to provide school bus transportation for all were the leaders of POAU in Missouri. They refused to believe that the subsequent protest was in fact a mass movement organized by the parents themselves; despite the fact that they traditionally complain about the Catholic hierarchy's authority over lay Catholics, in this case they wanted the Bishop to order the people to cease their activities.

I have no inside information from Missouri on this matter, but I am quite prepared to believe that the Catholic Bishops had nothing to do with the protest move. I don't doubt that members of the Citizens for Educational Freedom were heavily involved, but this is a lay movement and their endorsement should not necessarily be equated with that of the hierarchy. The school bus argument is one of those symbolic issues which arouse much more emotion than the facts themselves would seem to merit. Compared with the total cost of operating a parochial school, supporting a separate school bus system is relatively minor. But for many Catholic parents who pay public school taxes the refusal to allow parochial school children on public buses is just the last straw, and not only in Missouri. In many parts of the country the school bus issue is for rank-and-file Catholics the most sensitive of all Church-State issues, and Protestants and Jews would be wise to recognize this fact.

There is something significant in the fact that the Brooklyn *Tablet* referred to the Catholic protest as a civil rights demonstration. Catholics are learning from Negroes in this matter, I think, and more and more of them are thinking in terms of "protests," "demonstrations," "equal rights," etc. For my part, I support Negro efforts along these lines, but I have my doubts about how wise it is for Catholics to imitate them.

There is no question that Catholics have exactly the same rights as other citizens to demonstrate or stage protests to make their point, if other methods fail. And in my mind at least there is no doubt that Catholic efforts to explain the case for school bus aid have often fallen on deliberately deaf ears. But as a Catholic I would still have grave doubts about the course the parents in Missouri chose to follow in this matter.

There was, for one thing, the nature and timing of the protest move. In any state an overnight switch of Catholic students into the public school system would mean widespread disruption of education in an area. Where the protest movement was substantial, Missouri was no exception. Granted, the move did dramatize the savings to the taxpayer made by the Catholic schools, but there must be other ways of doing that. Then there was the question of timing. To make such a move immediately before final examinations, as was done in Missouri, could only deepen community antagonisms and embitter an already sensitive situation.

Perhaps most important of all, there is the question of proportion. Catholics may feel strongly about school buses and public aid in general, but are Catholic grievances really so strong as to call for such dramatic measures? I doubt it, myself; the Church has done well under the American system, and anyone who doubts it has only to look about him for the proof. Whatever our complaints about this or that injustice, it seems to me preposterous to compare the position of Catholics with that of Negroes.

The basic question here, it seems to me, is the nature of the Church and the image we want others to have of her. Lobbying and pressure tactics are part of the democratic process, but the Church is not just another pressure group, and we need to remember that fact. Many people already see the Church as a power bloc in our society, intent on picketing a movie here, banning a book there, and in general operating solely as a power group in our society. To some extent this image is due to centuries of ingrained anti-Catholic prejudice, but to some extent too I think we have helped to bring it on ourselves. I certainly see no reason why we should contribute to it unnecessarily, even in a cause as good as the school bus controversy. On balance, that is why I am glad Catholics in Missouri have called off their protest demonstration and why I wish they had never started it.

JAMES O'GARA

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A Question of Quality

Theology in the Catholic College

GEORGE H. TAVARD

THE THEOLOGY department of a Catholic college is, in most cases, in an ambiguous situation. On paper, very often, the college organizes its curriculum on the pattern of Newman's *Idea of a University,* theology forming the core, from which it radiates into all departments, as theology, Newmanly conceived, radiates into all disciplines. In practice, however, this radiation is usually neutralized by several causes.

In the first place, it would require the theology department to be aware of and alive to the major trends dominating the arts and sciences, a condition which commonly remains unfulfilled. In the second place, it would also imply that the teachers in all departments are themselves conversant with theological problems and methods, a condition which is equally hard to meet. Add to this the fact that most theology courses are usually imposed on the students with little choice of electives: the results are that many students take them half-heartedly, with no interest in theological formation and no higher ambition than to acquire credits and obtain passing grades. Moreover, our theology departments are, in most colleges, departments without a major, so that few teachers and students can take them very seriously.

This situation ought to cause concern. For at the present time Catholic higher education, with some major exceptions at the graduate level, cannot prove its necessity through original contributions to scientific and technical learning or even through achievements in the broad field of liberal arts. The necessity for the existence of Catholic colleges cannot be established either by advertising slogans like "fluent Christian men in an affluent society" or "dynamic Christian women."

Less convincing still is the advocacy of Catholic colleges as safe environments for the proper management of late adolescent tensions. Catholic colleges can justify their continued existence only insofar as they become centers of development of a truly Christian culture, that is, as they provide faculty and students with a spiritual, intellectual and aesthetic experience pregnant with Christian values. This should include all disciplines, since all have their meaning in relation to Christ. But it is evident that such a meaning cannot, in most cases, be arrived at by the technical methods of each art or science; it can come to light only through their integration in a theological world-view.

We run, however, into an almost insurmountable hurdle here. Theology can focus the concerns of a college only if theology teachers have genuine academic standing. The idea that any priest is a suitable teacher of college theology is a fallacy that we can no longer get away with. Theology teachers should be respected, by both faculty and students, for their standing in theology and not only for their cassock. In fact, the better students will soon detect that their theology teacher knows little more theology than they themselves. Yet theologians, at this time, are hardly ever available for colleges. Bishops and superiors naturally wish them to teach in their seminaries. Even apart from the obvious needs of seminaries, theologians are, if the truth be told, scarce. Their rarity makes it all but impossible to find a theology department with a homogeneous faculty, except where homogeneity is the result of a common mediocrity.

THE SOLUTION would, then, seem to lie in training laymen to teach theology. The willingness on the part of the administrations of Catholic colleges to hire laymen for their theology departments will grow with the increasing difficulty of finding suitable priest-teachers. The number of Sisters trained in theology is already growing. But the solution cannot reside only in the opening of theology departments to qualified laymen. For the quality of teaching is not guaranteed by the degrees obtained by the teachers, be they priests, nuns or laymen.

The quality of the theology that is taught is the essential question. Here, the problems of theology departments are compounded by the absence of agreement on basic curriculum and the lack, in my opinion, of suitable manuals. This may not be too important if we have the best faculty, for creative theological thought cannot be bound by a textbook. But the absence of quality theologians and good textbooks leaves the students in the unhappy condition of double jeopardy.

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Both teachers and textbooks, in any case, must depend on a fundamental choice yet to be made by most theology departments.

This choice lies between a watered-down course of scholastic theology on the one hand and "kerygmatic" theology on the other. Scholastic theology is most valuable if we know enough about its origin and development to assess its relevance today and to translate it into modern language. But the ignorance of Latin and the lack of historical perspective on the part of students makes a scholastic approach to college theology unsuitable. To believe that an outline more or less following the *Summa Theologicae* of St. Thomas Aquinas is a good vehicle of theological thought for college students is a preposterous idea. The method of a scholastic course cannot appeal to the great majority of students today. The opposite would be surprising indeed, and the first person to be surprised would be St. Thomas Aquinas.

But what is "kerygmatic" theology?

A theology department should aim at providing students with the means to obtain a knowledge of their faith which is on a level comparable to what they are learning in other fields. Now theological knowledge is not "scientific" in the modern sense of the term. Rather it is an existential knowledge developing by connaturality and destined to inform personal life. It should give, not an abstract acquaintance with problems and solutions, but a concrete habit of reflection, a sense of the mystery in which we live, a joy in Christian liberty, an awareness of the divine presence and a desire to encounter that presence more deeply. This cannot be fostered by memorizing a course.

Theology lectures, therefore, should not so much impart factual information as "make an impression," convey a central idea which will require time to grow. Immediate results, that could be assessed by a study of behavior patterns among students, cannot be expected. What is to be hoped for is that from their theology studies the students will keep a more or less conscious impression of a spiritual nature, akin to what Newman called "the illative sense," and that this impression will eventually mature and bear fruit.

The conveying of a spiritual impression is not only a matter of contents of courses, academic achievement and teaching ability. It also depends on the person of the teacher. College theology requires a faculty-student relationship allowing for more freedom of exchange than is found in the average clergy-laity relationship. This implies, of course, the freedom to question and disagree. It should be an essential part of the students' training to develop a more spontaneous and sincere, less stilted and artificial relationship to the clergy in particular and to the Church as a whole, than they would otherwise be likely to acquire. This has an intimate connection with their understanding of sacramental life.

Theology can never be a detached discipline indifferent to human relationships. It is a progressive initiation into an involvement with God; and an involvement with God, since the Incarnation, necessarily weaves a rich texture of "I-Thou" relationships among men. Theology means "speaking about God," and no one should speak about God, even in a classroom, without ultimate commitment to what he says: it is a "kerygma," the proclamation of a message.

IF THEOLOGY demands this indefinable quality of confrontation with the divine persons through the mediation of the human persons of teachers and students, learning theology ought not to be mere learning. Theology courses should ideally be offered in the framework of a good liturgical life, or at least colleges should make a good liturgical life available to the students. Without this experience theology loses its spiritual dimension and becomes a sterile misnomer. I suspect that a survey, infinitely delicate to organize, would show the most alert theological students to be also the most aware of their liturgical life. A study of theology can develop harmoniously only when, all things being equal, the theological encounter with Christ's message goes hand in hand with a liturgical encounter with His person.

Liturgical life means more than piety, and liturgy cannot be equated with devotions. The colleges that have a chaplain other than the theology teachers or that rely on the help of nearby parishes should, therefore, carefully study the coordination of liturgy and theology, for it would be disastrous for the students to lead a life of prayer untouched by the liturgical spirit, while the theology they are studying tends to promote their participation in the current renewal of the Church.

The gist of this article is of course that I have no ready-made solution to the problems of college theology. These problems seem to demand an overhaul of the concept of the Catholic college, for the inner tendency of a theological education is towards the integration of all aspects of culture and knowledge. Theology subsumes everything that is good in human disciplines, for "to speak about God" is to speak about all that God

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has made. The frequently discussed "dichotomy" between scientific and liberal education and theology is, from a theological point of view, nonsense. The interrelationships of theology with liturgy, on the one hand, with other academic disciplines, on the other, are essential to any education that deserves to be called Christian.

Many obstacles may stand in the way of developing these interrelationships, and first of all the inadequacy of theology teachers. But imagination and creativeness on their part should act as a leaven in the college community. It will no doubt only be after many experiments that a college will hit a good balance. Since we cannot expect this balance to be reached overnight, we should at least start at the beginning: with a reappraisal of theology programs and methods.

Journey to East Berlin

Seeds Behind the Wall

DANIEL CALLAHAN

JUST HOW LONG ago I learned one of the first lessons of life—that appearances can deceive—is hard to say. In any case, it is a lesson quickly forgotten; there is nothing then to do but start over. On my first day in Berlin I looked over The Wall from a wooden platform in Potsdamer Platz in the British sector of West Berlin. The view was not disappointing: The Wall itself crudely fashioned of yellowish concrete blocks topped with efficient barbed wire, behind it in the distance steel beams imbedded in the road, behind them a barbed wire fence. The day itself was perfect: gray, cold and windy, just right for the barrenness of the scene. Nature had imitated the works of man to perfection. The only flaw was the absence of "Vopos" in the expected number; the few that could be seen were almost out of sight in the distance. Luckily, however, I spied one of them looking—at me?—through binoculars, and the momentary sense of being a cheated tourist disappeared. Here was history before my eyes and, best of all, exactly the way I had read of it.

On my last day in Berlin, not long after, I don't know whether I saw The Wall at all. At most there could have been no more than a glimpse of it through a train window at that place where the S-Bahn passes from West into East Berlin on its way to Friedrichstrasse Station. But then that day the border guards had smiled when they took my passport, the air was warm, the sun bright, and the red flags and banners—"peace and socialism"—gave a festive air to an East Berlin making ready (or better, being "made ready") for May Day. On such a day it was hard not to believe that the whole business of The Wall was a great Western "revanchist" propaganda myth, or not to accept Walter Ulbricht's bland description of it as "the state frontier of the German Democratic Republic (DDR)." Nor were matters much helped by the pleasure of dinner at the Evangelical Academy in a pleasant East Berlin suburb, some good conversations with a small group of public school teachers at a Protestant mission center, or an enthusiastic description of the reconstruction of St. Hedwig's Cathedral by an assistant to Bishop Alfred Bengsch of Berlin—a bishop universally praised for his decision to live in East rather than West Berlin.

Looking into East Berlin on a gray day, or being there on a sunny one: which suggests its atmosphere best? In short, what is truth? The Wall, of course, is a lie. It is no more a "state frontier" than the walls of Sing Sing up the road from where I live could be called the boundary mark for a suburb of Ossining, New York. But it is almost as misleading to envision the Christians living in East Berlin as martyrs.

As Harvey Cox once wrote of his experience there, the first thing that comes to mind when one thinks of the place are people. It is conceivable that one could forget the guards wandering through the S-Bahn station with their shiny burp-guns slung over their backs, or the shells of the Third Reich offices lying willy-nilly between the stolid new Soviet-style administrative buildings, or even the anxiety one inescapably feels when turning over a passport for inspection by the border police, however reassured one may have felt on being told that searches and interrogations were "not common." But it is impossible to think that the people could be forgotten. Unlike the guards and the officials, they smiled more than they frowned: such trivialities make a lasting impression.

THOSE I talked with were undoubtedly an exceptional group. Like most East Berliners, they were unhappy about The Wall. They had friends they could not see;

DANIEL CALLAHAN, an associate editor of The Commonweal, recently returned from a trip to Europe.

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they suffered as much as anyone from a regime which prefers the slow suffocation of its opponents with the noose of red-tape to old-fashioned methods of terror. Yet, as if by tacit agreement, they were not much interested in talking about these things. What concerned them—and this was as true of pastors, students and youth leaders as it was of older teachers and workers—was the challenge of being responsible Christians in a society which they see as primarily industrialized and secularized and only secondarily Communist. They had no desire to escape, no desire to seek out the more favorable situation of the churches in the West. For some, in fact, the supposedly "free" churches of West Berlin and West Germany are seen as the captives of the old power of "throne and altar"—they preferred the public scorn of religion in the East to the more subtle ways the Church is made irrelevant in the West. For others, those less addicted to a curious kind of positive-thinking which sometimes lends an air of unreality to discussion with the first group, there is no glorification of their situation, but a solid determination to make the most of a bad thing and, if possible, to develop forms of church life pertinent to the present.

I was told that those Protestants actively working in East Berlin, unlike many of their Western brothers, have been greatly influenced by the social thought of the World Council of Churches. For them, to be "responsible" Christians means that withdrawal from society, the formation of tight spiritual ghettos, is out of the question. The fact that much contemporary Protestant social thought has been fashioned with the West in mind does not, in their eyes, negate its values for those living in the East. Communism adds something to their problems, there can be no doubt about that. But at the same time they see the task of the Christian as one involving full commitment to the people and the society in which they live; that the government may be Communist and anti-Christian does not absolve one from the duty of working for the betterment of life. It is taken to be neither helpful nor realistic to spend time dreaming of the old days or marking time in the hope of liberation.

AS I listened to this theme reiterated again and again, it was impossible not to think of the Christian response to the rise of Hitler and National Socialism in the thirties. Did not the fatal error, indeed the sinful evasion, of the German Christians of the thirties lie precisely in thinking that quiet witness to the truth, a kind of systematic optimism in the face of evil, was the way of wisdom? In rejecting the way of public protest, in suppressing any thought of armed rebellion, were not those I met simply helping to nail shut their own coffin or at least that of Christianity? I surprised no one by having doubts of this kind and the reply was always a perfect one—"What would you do?" Was overt opposition, of the kind that inevitably brings direct and brutal suppression, the killing off of all hopes for a gradual change, actually the more "responsible" course?

Yet there was more to the problem than that. On many occasions—for it proved to be a provocative question—I asked about the reaction to Pope John's encyclical *Pacem in Terris*. Those in East Berlin knew only those parts of it which the party newspaper *Neues Deutschland* had chosen to report; and from what I could gather much political hay was made of the implicit opening toward the left discernible in the encyclical. Yet even knowing that they were undoubtedly getting a distorted version of the encyclical they were pleased. One way or another, they felt, Christians would have to begin talking with Communists.

Many on the other side of The Wall do not feel that way. "The enemy of Christ must be our enemy," was the way one West Berlin Protestant pastor responded to this view when he heard it from the lips of a Catholic priest. "No," the priest had retorted, "the line between Christians and non-Christians is not clear." The priest was enthusiastic about the encyclical; the pastor skeptical. But that was in West Berlin. In the "East zone," or "Soviet sector," or "German Democratic Republic"—the phrase one chooses makes a difference—both the Catholics and Protestants I met praised it.

Who, then, is "responsible"—those who want to tear down The Wall by force or those who prefer the way of *Pacem in Terris*? Who is right, the construction engineer from Dresden in East Germany who, in front of the Brandenburg Gate on the Eastern side of The Wall, pressed questions about the pay for those in his profession in the United States and asked, for good measure, "Why doesn't the U.S. throw the Russians out of Berlin the way you threw them out of Cuba?"; or the Protestant pastor who digs no tunnels but spends his time trying to establish an effective ministry, patterned after the worker-priest movement, to workers in an East German industrial complex?

Answer these questions as you will. But listen to the words of a Protestant painter whose oils, all abstract, line his walls unsold because they are too large to be carried over and too Christian to be acceptable to the government: "Everyone here is hopeless; they all despair. But hope is a reality, even if it is the hope of people talking with each other. I want to paint that hope." Here is a man who wants The Wall to come down as much as anyone else, who suffers from it much more than those in the West whose photographic art has managed, for the sake of the tourist and newspaper trade, to capture its barbarity from a thousand angles. Their hope lies in one direction—the painter's in another. The one looks over The Wall from the safety of platforms, the other lives behind it—the one protests concrete and barbed wire, the other protests despair. No one has yet found a way to build a wall around a mind.

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Part of the Landscape?

Auden's Sacred Awe

RICHARD M. OHMANN

BY 1939 W. H. Auden, then thirty-two years old, was something of a monument. So magnetic was his name (and his presence) that a whole congeries of the most lustrous young poets—Day Lewis, MacNeice, Spender—had become known, somewhat ignominiously, as the "Auden group." Scarcely a young poet escaped his influence, and those who did, such as Dylan Thomas and George Barker, took shape on the literary scene as an *opposing* group, romantics in rebellion against an already established orthodoxy.

With Yeats dead and Eliot in early retirement (both of them political reactionaries, in any case), would-be king-makers looked to Auden as a likely successor, a poetic leader who might wave the anti-flags of his generation and create a new idiom for British verse. And why not? Auden had, indeed, brilliantly transmuted the modish talk of 1930 into a poetic style both familiar and strange. More to the point, perhaps, he had made pilgrimages to all the appropriate shrines of the intellectual left—Freud, Marx, Lawrence—taking from each a fashionable bit of inspiration. Whatever peculiarities the blend might seem to have, at least the ingredients were customary. All his credentials were in order, even to the symbolic tour of duty in Spain.

No wonder, then, that some threw eggs at the monument when, in the early stages of war with the common fascist enemy, Auden left England for America, began declaring that the artist had no stake in politics or causes, and (culminating betrayal) became a Christian. As Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Tillich, Niebuhr, and other foreign gods appeared in his pantheon, there were disquieting readjustments in his thought.

Guilt, once the companion of sexual repression and social injustice, became for Auden an acknowledgment of original sin. The barely possible release from guilt was no longer Love, the personal and instinctual, but Love, the universal and redemptive. As an ideal, never attainable but always desirable, the Just City was replaced by Eden, a world without consequences.

When he put together his *Collected Poetry* in 1945, Auden deleted many poems, rewrote others, left out contexts, in a way that suggested to many critics an attempt to purge or digest the heresies of his youth. And meanwhile his style had lost its edge of tough obliqueness: it was still familiar, but not so simultaneously strange, not so contemptuous of grammatical subjects and articles. The critics complained: Auden had sold out. He had become trivial. He had substituted metaphysics for poetry. He had not written a good poem since the journey to Canterbury via America.

ODDLY ENOUGH, when Auden was dropped by the enthusiasts of the radical thirties, no band of conservative, metaphysical critics stepped forth to adopt him. Less is written about him today, and with less passion, than twenty years ago. Few new poets, I would judge, consciously take Auden as a model, though Karl Shapiro is right in saying that Auden, more than any other poet, originally built the contemporary style. Perhaps the penalty for creating a landscape is that one becomes part of it, unnoticed.

Auden is an "established" poet, to be sure, solidly implanted in the anthologies and the modern poetry courses, winner of awards, called back to Oxford as Professor of Poetry. But the poems that sustain this reputation are, by and large, those of the thirties. The man is still with us, writing prolifically and well (although *Homage to Clio*, his latest volume of verse, is slight, *Nones* and *The Shield of Achilles* are full of superb poetry); yet for all public purposes Auden the poet is about as extinct as the trilobite, his continued real presence an embarrassment to critics, like that of the later Wordsworth, or of Eliot himself.

The demand for consistency in a poet is understandable: after all, the poet is part oracle and part priest, and in these *personae* gross vacillation can be unseemly. But surely it is time to agree that in so far as we have embalmed Auden on the grounds of heart failure and ruptured technique, we have botched our diagnosis, whatever the theory behind our treatment.

Look at Auden's works from a reasonable distance, and the consistencies are more striking than the shifts—certainly as obvious as those which make one corpus of Donne's work, or Dryden's, or Yeats'. Particularly valuable in providing distance is the newly published collection of Auden's criticism, *The Dyer's Hand* (Random House. $7.50). Here are assembled fifteen years' worth of major comments on literature, which serves as a gloss on his early poetry no less than on his later.

Before condemning Auden for shifts in allegiance, it is sensible to reconsider the relationship between art

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and belief, a matter on which Auden himself is quite articulate. Poetry, he says, has in it a strong element of *play*—the formal characteristics emphasize pure disinterested sound, not message. It is ill-suited to controversy, therefore, and should have no ulterior purpose except, "by telling the truth, to disenchant and disintoxicate." It should simply dwell mnemonically on things as they are.

IDEAS are less important for the poet than the way in which they are entertained, less important than their emotional accompaniment. As Auden has it, "in poetry, all facts and all beliefs cease to be true or false and become interesting possibilities," though the poet must be emotionally *involved* in them as a man.

Now this is not the only position that can be defended, but it is a respectable one. To criticize Auden for setting emotion above ideology and causes is no more reasonable than to attack Swift for preferring sanity and good will to "projects," or Voltaire for making Candide retreat from philosophy to the garden, or Arnold for rejecting the "machinery" of social reform in favor of culture.

Nor, I think, is it even possible to see in Auden's verse, as Randall Jarrell did twenty years ago, a retreat from definite programs, a failure of the impulse to action. As early as his undergraduate years, Auden had told Spender that the poet must have "no decided views which he seeks to put across in his poetry." And looking back now at his poems of the thirties, one can see only with difficulty how readers in those days could have taken them for expressions of political doctrine.

True, Auden could roar at the newspaper magnate,

> Beethameer, Beethameer, bully of Britain,
> With your face as fat as a farmer's bum;
> . . . you'll get the thrashing you richly deserve

but his clinical irony undermined the revolutionary excess of the speaker as surely as his invective destroyed the capitalist.

There is in this early poetry no sentimentalizing of the masses: the six beggared cripples who long "to dine with Lord Lobcock and Count Asthma on the platinum benches" are as foolish in their values as the rich they envy. Society is sick, top to bottom. Moreover, Auden was from the start too complex an intellectual to find peace in panaceas; he could never state one position without feeling the tug of its opposite, and his interest in leftist reform movements scarcely went beyond their psychological impact on society.

SO IT should be no surprise to find Auden saying now, as he has been saying at least since 1940, that poets are ill-equipped to traffic in politics, since their main concern is with the individual and with emotional relationships. What kind of climate does society offer for the flourishing of art, and of the self?—this is the only "political" question that remains alive for Auden. Thus he laments the rise of our bland, anonymous public, the decline of folk art, the absence of a sense of community among artists, and, especially, the loss of a sense that the public realm is a "sphere of revelatory personal deeds." The machine and the state have slain the hero, robbed poetry of its traditional human subject, substituted "behavior" for deeds.

In response to mass society, however, Auden offers, not a political ideology, but the idea of the community, bound by love; not Utopia, but Eden (an absolute monarchy, by the way, with pageantry, play, and Victorian furniture, and with no cars, movies, planes, television sets or radios). In short, Auden is simply not competing in the political marketplace. But neither did he do so in the thirties: those revolutionaries in his poems who set off over mountains in lonely exile were not looking for a Marxist paradise, but for "new styles of architecture, a change of heart," a recovery of psychic health in themselves and in society.

AUDEN'S apoliticalism can lead him to insensitivity when he does discuss social issues. He claims, for instance, that the whole question of Communism, socialism, and capitalism is merely a "party issue," a debate over practical means to an agreed-upon end, not a revolutionary issue which turns on differences in principle.

This is, of course, preposterous. To ignore the heartbreaking human consequences of unregenerate capitalism (i.e., *pure* capitalism) or of totalitarian Communism is to lose touch with feeling, as well as with social thought. But as poet and critic, Auden need not play the political theorist. And indeed, in these critical essays his notion of society is more a source of metaphors than a program.

The "city," one of his preoccupations, is a state of mind and a way of organizing moral experience, and has geographical existence only on the map of the emotions—like Belmont and Venice in Auden's treatment of *The Merchant of Venice*. Or, more typically still, he speaks of works of art themselves as cities, as verbal societies, possessing at best an order not attainable in the fallen real world. What then is the political function of art? Only to remind the politicians that those they govern "are people with faces, not anonymous members."

If Auden, as poet and critic, is nearly apolitical, his religious beliefs, too, reside mainly beneath the artistic surface, as little more than "interesting possibilities." Long ago he argued that although all important art contains buried metaphysics, the writer is unwise to insist on his metaphysics overtly.

About the only dogmas he holds crucial to the artist are these three: a historical world exists, and its existence is good; that world is nonetheless fallen; that

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world is redeemable. Nor does one often find in his poetry a less ambiguous statement of belief than this:

For the end, for me as for cities,
Is total absence: what comes to be
Must go back into non-being
For the sake of the equity, the rhythm
Past measure or comprehending.

Lines of the fifties, but who could tell that a conversion lies between them and these of the thirties?

And Tomorrow
Comes. It's a world. It's a way.

The speaking voice of Auden's verse rarely claims to know the answers, whatever Auden the man may know.

HIS concern, then, is not with ideas as true or false, but with ideas as felt, and still more pronouncedly, with feelings themselves, intellectualized, ordered, and generalized. The poet's business is to start with "a crowd of recollected occasions of feeling," and transform the crowd into a community. Auden is our theologian of the emotions, our geographer of the self.

The Dyer's Hand shows him scrutinizing moral and emotional experience, setting up a calculus of desire, guilt, repentance, love, boredom, and the rest, dissecting the psyche and its images of itself, just as in his poetry he has always collapsed incident, shining object, and countryside into structures of feeling. It is not really very far from his early "Paysage Moralisé" to his later "Bucolics," which, though they give us somewhat more of the visual and concrete, still have their artistic center in psychology.

Yet for all this preoccupation with emotion, Auden is the most impersonal of poets: "unless the poet sacrifices his feelings completely to the poem," the poem fails. And not just *his* feelings, but all particularity of feeling, for Auden's dedication is to the type, not the individual. Our sufferings are only poetically interesting, he contends, in so far as they are typical of the human condition, and for "sufferings" he might have substituted the name of any emotion: Auden dearly loves a generalization.

This bent altogether dominates his criticism, which bulges with dichotomies, categories, and distinctions, to the extent that he seems more interested in extra-literary insights exampled by the works than in the works themselves. Thus his discussion of *Othello* proceeds out of a distinction between the villain and the criminal, his treatment of Ibsen and Cervantes out of a distinction between the hero as genius and the hero as apostle, his essay on Frost out of a distinction between poems dominated by truth (Prospero poems—Frost is Prospero-dominated) and poems dominated by beauty (Ariel poems). Eden and the New Jerusalem, the I and the Ego, deeds and behavior: the book moves through a whirl of divisions and categories, in which the unique detail virtually disappears behind its significance.

In his poetry, too, detail quickly yields to meaning. It is interesting to remember how many of his poems view landscapes from mountain passes, cliffs, planes—how enamored he is of the "spell of high places"; from such points of vantage no leaf or stone is visible, but only pattern. In general, Auden steps back from the swarm of things so as to piece out the pattern, and his vantage point is psychological and moral.

Compare two ways of looking at a wood, one Frost's, one Auden's:

The hard snow held me, save where not and then
One foot went through. The view was all in lines
Straight up and down of tall slim trees
Too much alike to mark or name a place by . . .
—Frost, "The Wood-Pile"

Guilty intention still looks for a hotel
That wants no details and surrenders none;
A wood is that, and throws in charm as well,
And many a semi-innocent, undone,
Has blamed its nightingales who round the deed
Sang with such sweetness of a happy greed.
—Auden, "Woods"

There are shadows of significance behind Frost's trees, to be sure: in his wood a man will understand how capable nature is of a frightening, inhuman blankness. Yet the parallel trees and the crusty snow are at least as much there as the emotions they prompt. Frost cares about *seeing* the wood. Auden's stanza begins with guilty intention and ends with happy greed, and the wood itself, though it occasions the speculations, makes only a courtesy appearance. Its trees are neither straight nor twisted. It is not this wood, that wood, or any wood, but an archetype, a total abstraction from experience. The real world is for Auden an allegorical text, and the intellectual constructs that can be placed upon it are paramount.

The danger of this method is obvious: the poet may end by dispensing with life; his poems may transform the unique into "An algebraic formula,/ An abstract model of events," as he put it once. Yet Auden's work is remarkably alive. What keeps it from mummifying experience? *The Dyer's Hand,* I think, points to an answer.

In these essays, Auden insists on the poet's feeling of "sacred awe" before some objects, beings, and events. There are parts of the world which inexplicably ignite his imagination, and before which he does homage in verse. The awe and reverence are there in Auden's own poetry. They are the force which mediates between detail and schema, particular and general, object and thought. It is sacred awe, a sense of the power and meaning that permeates experience, which animates the abstractions of this highly intellectual poet, and which should preserve him, finally, from the charge of ideological fickleness. For he is a celebrant of things, not a partisan.

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THE STAGE

View from the East

THE TYRONE GUTHRIE Theatre opened on a note of real éclat. The main streets of Minneapolis were festooned with white pennants with an heraldic crimson "G", and the monogram was repeated throughout the building, on the tickets and the program and on the blazers of the youthful ushers, where it took the place of a Princeton shield or the emblem of a yachting or rowing club. And in fact there was an air of a regatta or some other clean, wholesome public activity about the event, whose importance is that it brought to the Midwest its first permanent professional repertory company, together with a theater built expressly for its purposes.

When Lincoln Center's theater opens here, there will be far less innocent enthusiasm and naive pride; too many of us are already skeptical of its program and the people who are running it, as well as of the very possibility of being extricated by any single enterprise from our condition of theatrical derangement. But out in those great new spaces all was optimism and exuberance.

The city, ecstatic with sudden glory, turned out in tuxedos and evening gowns, cheered the theater, the performers, the directors and the occasion, drank champagne at two successive open houses and felt itself to have entered the big time overnight. For the visitor, sophistication was a burden; if you couldn't jettison it all, if you kept making distinctions and applying criteria that in the general euphoria weren't being applied, there was nevertheless an infectious quality to the enthusiasm.

And there was reason for it. To begin with, there was the theater itself. That it should have been built where it has been is the most impressive, although also the most precarious, fact of all. For what is being tested in Minneapolis is of course the idea of decentralization; if the Guthrie Theatre takes hold and works, if its standards are high and the response to its efforts substantial and continuous, then it may be the fountainhead of a new era in the American theater. But if it fails, we are all going to have to get right down to our skins and start all over again in a barn.

The building, which one feared might have been ugly or unuseful, is the answer to a great many prayers. Modeled in basic ways after the Shakespeare Festival Theatre in Canada, it is quite beautiful and admirably suited to a classic repertoire. Around its spacious Open Stage there is a steeply rising orchestra and a narrow balcony running five-sixths of the way; the seats (the capacity is 1,437) are covered in pastel-colored burlap, the acoustics are good and there is ample space for intermissions and easy access to every section. The whole thing gives rise to an atmosphere of bright, self-confident, non-competitive vigor and casual expertise—a theater open to whatever degree of technical ingenuity and dramatic imagination wishes to be exercised on its stage.

The resident company is another matter. Guthrie has assembled an extremely uneven group of performers, strong in places, adequate in others and lamentably weak in too many more. The women are especially below the standard one would think minimal for such an undertaking. If the situation is likely to improve in time, as the actors settle down to their tasks, it would still seem that some major changes are going to have to be made if the building is not to remain a more impressive phenomenon than the life it displays.

THE same thing is true of the production and direction. The two openings were "Hamlet," directed by Guthrie, and Molière's "The Miser," which Douglas Campbell staged, and the difference between them was startling. Whatever can be said for a modern-dress "Hamlet," Guthrie's was a boon to traditionalists, an exceedingly unpleasant production, gimmicky, heterogeneous, inconsistent and without any style that derived from sources other than a vulgar, obvious theatricality. Campbell's "Miser," on the other hand, was unified and full of style; it took advantage of the open stage as "Hamlet" didn't, it was lively and vivacious although a bit superficial, and if it, too, suffered from the inadequacies of many of its performers, it managed to rise above them as "Hamlet" could not.

From the latter's opening scene, when Horatio, in overcoat and scarf, and the soldiers, in long military capes and gold helmets with red plumes, appear on watch, Guthrie's "Hamlet" is a series of ludicrous mismatings of costumes and properties. Claudius comes on as Kaiser Wilhelm in certain scenes and as a tail-coated maître d' in others; Hamlet delivers his best-known soliloquy in a red velvet smoking jacket; Laertes returns from Paris in a Hungarian Commissar's outfit, brandishing a pistol; Fortinbras stands like Bismarck in spiked helmet and breastplate while two Tommies, circa 1945, operate a field telephone at his feet; Ophelia and Laertes bid each other goodby carrying tennis rackets; her funeral scene is out of a Jean Renoir movie, that of Hamlet's departure for Denmark out of Orson Welles. And when Hamlet, in slippers and sport shirt, refers to a "bare bodkin" or Ophelia breathlessly tells Polonius that the prince's doublet is all undone and his stockings down, the absurdity of taking the play out of its period becomes most flagrant and attention-shredding.

In the midst of the carnage George Grizzard managed to hold out a Hamlet by no means good but better than one feared. If it was tame and well-behaved, it was also adequately spoken and properly paced, and it avoided the worst pitfalls that the role is perennially threatened by. Robert Pastene was an acceptable Po-

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lonius and Ken Ruta a fine ghost, but almost all the other major roles were badly served. Jessica Tandy was an astonishingly inept and melodramatic Gertrude, Lee Richardson an undeviatingly wooden Claudius, Nicholas Coster a high-school Laertes, Alfred Rossi and Michael Levin a Rosencrantz and Guildenstern straight from the junior prom, and Ellen Geer, well Ellen Geer was simply the worst Ophelia I have ever seen or can imagine.

Campbell's "Miser" redeemed the week. Employing music, ballet and masks, it was high-spirited and visually ingratiating, the liberties taken with the text, such as a surrealist rendering of Harpagon's discovery that his money has been stolen, being entirely justified. Hume Cronyn's Harpagon was a masterpiece of comic invention and physical wit; his supporting cast was two or three notches above Grizzard's, although Miss Geer turned up again and was joined by one Rita Gam, a Hollywood personality with Hollywood equipment for its projection.

The Guthrie Company is going to have a five-month season, adding "The Three Sisters" to the repertoire next month and "Death of a Salesman" the month after that. It has, as this report has indicated, the advantages of a splendid theater, of permanence, stability and a great fund of good will. But none of this is going to do a bit of good if its "Hamlet" rather than its "Miser" sets its standard and tone. We are going to be watching; Guthrie has announced that the Theatre will do only classics ("Death of a Salesman"?—the definition is really being stretched, but no matter), but let us pray that he learns to do them, not do them in. RICHARD GILMAN

THE SCREEN

Revolt of the Vegetables

ALTHOUGH I am not a science-fiction fan, I do enjoy an occasional science-fiction movie. "The Blob" and "The Thing" managed to raise a few goose pimples on goose pimples. "Journey to the Center of the Earth" used some good technical tricks and an amusing script to put over Jules Verne's adventure story. From England came "The Day the Earth Caught Fire," which provided further scares for those deploring repeated atomic tests, and, best of all, "The Village of the Damned." which mixed realism and horror to tell a frightening tale based on John Wyndham's *The Midwich Cuckoos.*

Now from England come two more thrillers designed to keep audiences on the edge of their chairs. Neither film is entirely successful, but both will probably have their adherents. Because "The Day of the Triffids" is again based on a novel by John Wyndham (about carnivorous plants—and there are such things, you know) it should have been fool-proof as a science-fiction picture. After a shower of meteorites descends over England and much of the Continent, blinding most of its unfortunate people, the triffid plants begin to blossom forth and grow to enormous size. The awful thing about these triffids is that they not only move about, but their favorite food seems to be people.

So far so good—or bad. But the film's script, written by Philip Yordan, gets too involved and episodic as it skips back and forth among the leading characters who are saved from the blindness scourge and now spend the rest of their efforts in escaping from the dreadful man-eating triffids. In London, an American seaman (Howard Keel) manages to rescue a little girl (Janina Faye) and get to France where the triffids are already running rampant. Howard then saves a French woman (Nicole Maurey) not only from the triffids but also from people who have gone berserk; and Howard, with Janina and Nicole in an abandoned circus truck, sets out across country for a naval base in Spain.

In the meantime, back on the Cornish coast, a marine biologist and his wife (Kieron Moore, Janette Scott) who work high up in a lighthouse are fighting off the triffids and figuring out how to exterminate them. The story jumps back and forth in a disconnected way between these two groups of people as they elude the hungry plants. The technical effects are well done, and director George Sekely succeeds in frightening his good cast and us often enough; but the picture carries little conviction, and the plot becomes rather silly. One thing about a science-fiction movie: you must actually believe all this is happening.

ENGLISH producer Michael Relph and director Basil Dearden, who have given us such interesting sociology-fiction films as "Sapphire" (racial problems) and "Victim" (blackmailing and homosexuality) now make a stab at brainwashing, with special reference to experiments in isolation that result in deprivation of the senses. Their new film, "The Mind Benders," starts out well with an investigation of a suicide that seems to be connected with treason.

After the death of this Oxford professor who was conducting tests in the effects of isolation, another Oxford physiologist (Dirk Bogarde) agrees to submit to the experiment. He is suspended in a tank of water for many hours. Afterward his fellow scientists realize he

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is in a state of mental collapse and they test the brain-washing effects by suggesting to him what seems to me an unforgivably cruel proposition: they tell him he and his wife are no longer in love with each other.

The scientific aspects of "The Mind Benders" are quite well handled, and the cast, which also includes Mary Ure as Bogarde's long-suffering wife, and John Clements as a government security officer, are fine throughout. So are the Oxford backgrounds and the laboratory scenes. But the trouble with the film is its extra-plot devices. Bogarde makes the physiologist so neurotic even before the shocking experiment that one doubts his ability as a scientist and certainly his value as the subject of an unusual test of this kind. Furthermore, the tampering with the husband-wife relationship is such an unholy scheme that it detracts from the validity of the whole picture. And the final plot solution to bring Bogarde back to his right senses is so contrived that it weakens whatever seriousness the picture may have.

Actually "The Mind Benders" could have been a very good movie. The "reduction of sensation" experiments being carried on at Indiana University and in England merit investigation through the cinema medium. There are, no doubt, moral problems in connection with such experiments as there are in hypnosis. If so, the movies must not treat them lightly or in a manner that is merely a device.

In this story, Bogarde coldly cuts off his wife and starts chasing around with a college-widow type. But when his wife, who became pregnant nine months earlier, trips, writhes in pain, and starts having her baby, it is Dr. Bogarde who must deliver the child—in a long birth scene. Not many subjects of the reduced-sensation experiments are going to have to deliver their own babies to bring their disturbed minds back to normal. How do the other subjects come back?

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

Blessed Virgin Mary

By THOMAS COLEMAN

Lively way of woman love, attraction,
quiet wheel center of movement,
silent mother among her children,
proud while they play.
Not by action's aggression she moves,
but by motion's center and end,
curious passive power, womanly.

Mulier fortis
in fight of hurried housework,
such surge of action is accidental
by-product of her power,
contributing comfort spread around her
to attract her loving loved ones near.

But for her the fight is over,
once active housewife
of careworn callouses
is pure passive now in power.

We appeal to her love not her action.
We seek in her the center where surged lowly love.
We ask her not for anxious nagging,
but for her loving nod.

It is said,
through her hands we receive.
Her cupped hands extend,
fingers open
and delight drifts through,
all lightsome love
of her Son shining steady sure.

Fine feminine wonder of womanhood,
her benign burgeoning engrafted grows,
passive now but still benign,
her humble holiness for our sakes decided,
maiden mother of love, but not matriarch,
not restless ruler ever,
but silent soul at center of salvation,
willing it by, "Be it done to me,"
not command, not even petition,
but simple silent assent.

Mighty Moses met his Master
in trembling tower of flaming fire
in lightning flashes,
volcanic ashes,
not so her theophany,
not even the still small whisper of the prophet's vision,
but the angel's declaration and her assent.
She fought no fight,
no wrestling to match the malech-yahweh as the prophet played,
but passive pure,
"So be it."

So as not God to her nor she to us is frightening.
Some fear her in their fantasy.
But for all who love her not she is nothing.
They tremble before a tyrant.
But there is no matriarch, only mother.
And for those who love
she draws delight,
not reaching
but restful now.

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In Search of the Snow of Yesteryear

The World of C. P. Snow. By Robert Greacen. Scorpion Press. $1.75.
C. P. Snow. By Frederick R. Karl. Southern Illinois University Press. $4.50.
Two Cultures? The Significance of C. P. Snow. By F. R. Leavis. Pantheon. $1.65.

by Geoffrey Wagner

FREDERICK Karl's is the third recent book on C. P. Snow, and it is by far the best. Indeed, it is the only serious one, for the others are acts of piety by the English Establishment; viz. the encomiastic British Council pamphlet by Snow's friend William Cooper ("To read it [Snow's Work] is to believe it") and the no less uncritical piece of slipshod journalism by the *Daily Telegraph* hack, and author of a study of Noel Coward, Robert Greacen ("People have always fascinated Snow; he likes them, which is more than can be said for some of our *angst*-mongers" etc.).

Greacen's book is distinguished only by a bibliography by Bernard Stone. The latter is useful yet contains errors, notably concerning the dates covered by various novels in the sequence, whereas Karl is always accurate, and rightly corrects Snow on the ages of his own characters. None of these studies, however, lists Snow's contributions over a period as fiction reviewer to *The Sunday Times* (London); Karl might have fortified, or facilitated, his section on Snow's aesthetics by glancing over these. Still, he provides useful comparative chronological tables of the lives of C. P. Snow and of his central character, Lewis Eliot.

Karl takes the reader on a blow-by-blow tour through the Snow opus, much in the manner of the old Appleton-Century-Crofts Handbooks. And the result is that his subject cannot stand up to criticism of this order, revealing, as it does, how the man has really suffered from his supporters. Lately England has been trying to uncover a writer of importance, but neither Karl nor Lionel Trilling in *Commentary*, June 1962, would seem to agree with the Establishment that C. P. Snow is one.

In particular, Karl finds the material Snow deals with to be far ahead of his style, or verbal potential, with many characterizations (such as Sawbridge) beyond his power altogether; Lewis Eliot—his name reminding me of Wyndham Lewis and T. S. Eliot (two "enemies")—is judged a failure in refraction and unintentionally unpleasant ("a born master of deceit"). This last is so. Notice the man's attitude to servants—and of course it is impossible that someone of Lewis Eliot's level could have been elected to a club such as Pratt's represents.

But the most damaging point Karl makes, to my mind, is his indictment of the conservatism behind Snow's position—the danger of ambition, the suspicion of any distinction, and so on—so that Snow ends up not a superior Galsworthy (as Harry T. Moore suggests), but a sort of bad British Marquand, "a spokesman for the literary right" serving up a "stodge" of affirmative literature. The recipe for the good life becomes the repression of ambition, a secular attitude, and the acceptance of the second-rate. Karl calls this "an opiate for the middle class." The recent spate of Russian translations of Snow's work bears him out.

The vulnerable side of Karl's approach is perhaps his habit of classification; there seems little reason to introduce quite so many knowing allusions to Kafka, Gide, Camus, Beckett and Faulkner, when dealing with a writer so resolutely non-"modern." The British press has gored Karl for this habit. However, such critics have done so, to my mind, because British criticism is trying its best to become American, and Karl gives the impression here of reverting to an older British tradition—that, say, of Saintsbury—around the end of the nineteenth century.

There remains F. R. Leavis. His Richmond Lecture, delivered last year against Snow, is here reprinted with outriders in the form of a (fantastic) preface by himself and an afterword by one of his Cambridge friends. Leavis is really rather wonderful and there are many who wouldn't want him any different. After all, his celebrated attack does contain an immense amount of sense. There is in it a seriousness about literature which is endearing, and an enormous love of the human imagination.

Leavis is simply asking that the novelist be on the highest plane of intelligent existence, and he is distressed by the nature of the civilization he senses upon us in the secular "New Men." He is alarmed by what Karl calls Snow's "administrator's view of human nature." As Leavis puts it, "Snow . . . *is* frightening in his capacity of representative phenomenon." Michael Yudkin reinforces Leavis with an essay criticizing Snow, albeit mildly.

The trouble is that Leavis' recent bitterness is so unfocused. It derives especially from an exasperation phrased as a well-nigh paranoiac polemic against journalism—by a scholar. Yet the line cannot be drawn so sharply in contemporary studies; none other than Mrs. Q. D. Leavis showed that it could not be, over thirty years ago, in her *Fiction and the Reading Public*. Among others, Eliseo Vivas has shown a carelessness of reading on the part of Leavis that is itself little above the journalistic.

Yet Leavis is convinced of his own picture and, temperately criticized by Trilling, in his "Prefatory Note" he consigns Trilling to the philistines, "to the ethos I was intent on challenging." To have been attacked, as Trilling has been in a matter of months, by both Edmund Wilson and F. R. Leavis seems to me excellent preparation for Oxford—which is where Trilling will shortly be. Nevertheless, all this debate is essentially healthy, for literary values, and it will be interesting to see how it affects the reception of the new Snow novel this summer.

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Struggle for Identity

The Mind of Africa. By W. E. Abraham. The University of Chicago Press. $4.

by Victor C. Ferkiss

AFRICA is now in the last stages of its struggle to eliminate colonialism. But the advent of political independence has left many Africans dissatisfied. Not only do most African states still have close economic ties to their former colonial masters but more important—and more disquieting to many African intellectuals—there is a continuing foreign cultural and spiritual dominance. With the end of colonialism a renascent Africa is seeking to recover her own soul.

The Mind of Africa is an expression of that struggle in all its often inchoate and confused strivings. W. E. Abraham, an Oxford-trained philosopher, teaches at the University of Ghana. His book was read in manuscript by Ghanaian President Nkrumah and is clearly tied to Nkrumah's attempt to secure for Ghana leadership in the re-creation and reassertion of the "African Personality" (a uniquely African approach to life in all its aspects).

Abraham's premise is that "Every society has an ideology," and he seeks to explain Africa to the world and to itself by delineating a specifically African world view that is metaphysical, rational and spiritual in contrast to what he regards as the materialist and scientistic philosophies of both the West (capitalist civilization) and the East (the Marxist world).

Africa, Mr. Abraham holds, is different, and must be culturally as well as politically independent of both East and West. It has its own distinctive way of life in which all aspects of human activity are related to a fundamentally spiritual view of the universe—"No man is a child of the earth," in the language of a traditional African proverb Abraham quotes approvingly.

What this specifically African way of life is, Abraham tries to illustrate by an interesting account of the culture of the Akan—the dominant ethnic group in Central Ghana. He contends that the Akan way of life is essentially representative of Africa as a whole, though he is too well informed to claim a literal, detailed correspondence among the multitude of Africa's tribal cultures. The Akan culture is not individualistic but communalist and sees God, man and nature as parts of an integrated whole; political, economic, family and artistic life all reflecting underlying spiritual realities.

Abraham explicitly recognizes that this African culture he describes is not unique. However, he fails to recognize that what he is describing as African is in fact a local variant of the folk culture common to humanity, the folk culture which in Europe fused with Christianity to produce the traditional way of life of the pre-industrial Western world. What he rejects as the materialist culture of the West is really the culture of the Enlightenment, which built upon and largely superseded Christian culture in the West.

Africa's salvation depends, in Abraham's view, on a return to its traditional roots. "Africa needs a constant reminder of its massively traditional nature. . . Its best prospects lie in utilizing this tradition and heritage. . . . The independence of Africa will not mean much unless it can be egocentric in action and self-image."

But if Africa is to be herself once more it is not enough to restore the essence of traditional culture. Every society must have a material base. Africa, Abraham contends, is potentially the richest continent in the world (a rather doubtful proposition), but to attain its rightful place in the world two things are necessary: creation of some form of Pan-African union, enabling Africa to pool its material and cultural resources, and industrialization, enabling Africa to provide for its own needs.

It is here that the central confusion of Abraham and many other African nationalist intellectuals is most manifest. They somehow assume that industrialization is not incompatible with the traditional folk culture which constitutes the essence of African distinctiveness—the culture which industrialization is supposed to support. This problem, although recognized in passing, is speedily

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glossed over. Yet it was this same process of modernization that destroyed traditional Christian culture in the West and produced the civilization Abraham rejects for Africa. If Africans, having seen the effects of this process elsewhere and having determined to guard against them, can somehow prevent industrialism from destroying the spiritual basis of their own culture, they may yet have a claim to instruct us all.

The Mind of Africa does not live up to its claim to explain Africa to the world. It is often confused, pretentious, and wrong. But its very failings are illustrative of the thinking of some of Abraham's most influential African contemporaries. It is therefore a book which deserves a careful reading by all concerned with the future role of Africa in world civilization.

Teilhardiana

Teilhard de Chardin, Scientist and Seer. By Charles E. Raven. Harper & Row. $4.

by Thomas Leclerc

THE MOUNTAIN of Teilhardian literature keeps rising and our first reaction to a new study is the question: is it a sterile repetition, a new label on old wine, or something worth reading?

Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, Canon Raven has several valuable qualifications for this study of the life and thought of the famous Jesuit anthropologist. He is a noted Anglican theologian, a former student of Lloyd Morgan, is well versed in the English philosophers of nature, competent in science, and generally quite familiar with the important trends in English philosophy, science and theology, where he himself has been creative for some fifty years.

The first Englishman to attempt a full book on Teilhard, Raven tries a somewhat new approach. Building on the facts of Teilhard's life with many details (sometimes confusing in their tightly-packed brevity) he tries to show: how Teilhard's thought grew out of contact with such minds as Bergson, Blondel, LeRoy, H. G. Wells, Huxley, Benson, and others, and how Teilhard *does not stand alone* but rather as one among several modern thinkers with the same general worldview, his importance resting on his wider influence and deeper impact on the scholarly and everyday world. Tracing from start to finish Teilhard's relations with each of these thinkers, Raven succeeds in creating a logical, interesting and informative approach to the multifaced gem of the Teilhardian world vision.

Aimed at introducing British readers to Teilhard, the book does pose some difficulties for an American reader, because it presumes a familiarity with many insular currents of thought not too well known in the States. The scholarly treatment is lucid, however, and there are explanations of these currents that should be adequate for the reader of average education.

Several chapters are worth noting as original in Teilhardian literature: one on his work and friends in Britain with their influence on his thought; that on emergent evolution, where Teilhard's concept is compared with those of Smuts (holism) and Morgan (emergent evolution); and the study of Pauline influences on Teilhard's Christology, where Raven notes that Teilhard, like Paul, had to turn to the Gentiles because of the Pharisaical dogmatism of some "Roman officials." "If under the circumstances Rome could not at once endorse or authorize Teilhard's message, at least it did not condemn him —except to silence. It waited on the event, without (it appears) any recognition of its importance!" The study of sin, negative *vs* positive Christianity, and Christology are well done, possessing an Anglo-Catholic penetration which is very close, if not identical with the views of what Gustave Weigel recently termed "the open-door theologians." The comparison of French and English science is, in particular, very illuminating.

Raven exposes clearly the fascination and scandal of Teilhard: he is, he says, "a denizen of the two worlds [science and religion] which the Western peoples have treated for the past four centuries as rigidly distinct, [who] has functioned happily in both . . . and has succeeded in living without a trace of schizophrenia, indeed with a remarkable integrity and completeness."

REVIEWERS

Geoffrey Wagner is the author of the recently published novel, *The Asphalt Campus* (Macmillan).

Victor C. Ferkiss is visiting Associate Professor of Government at Georgetown University.

Thomas Leclerc is the translator and editor of Cuenot's biography of Teilhard, to be published by Helicon in the Fall.

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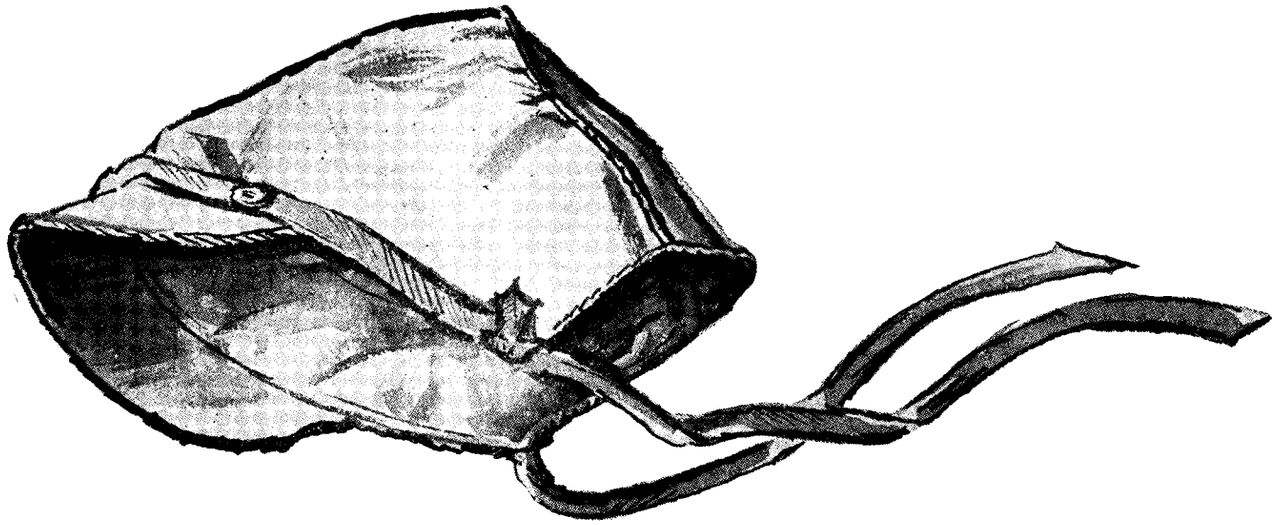

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